Twitter Thread by Jalil Rasheed



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(1) Thread: I joined fund management early in my career. At that point, my first firm was small, I had many opportunities to learn & grow. It was not as structured so roles were flexible. Which is why I always encourage to start with small firm and learn as much as you can.

> Not sure if you've shared. But would love to hear how did you climb the corporate ladder so fast. To be a CEO at 36/37 is a remarkable experience. Was it worth it, to go up so fast?
>
> — Rushdee (@rushdeebhm) January 17, 2021

(2) People were wonderful, I was assigned a mentor who looked after my personally & professionally and gave me guidance from the occassional erratic & naive moves I made, purely down to inexperience. Were there people I disliked too? Yes

(3) I had a deep interest in how the business was run, although I was part of the investment team. My bosses & seniors were ever willing to answer my many questions. I, through my own initiative, started developing my own relationships, that I would then bring over to the firm

(4) Bosses appreciated this, and quickly I was involved in the business aspects of things. Being small firm then, allowed me to put my hand up for everything. I sat in on operations meeting that I had nothing to do with because I was curious about how the chain worked

(5) I got picked to run a newly formed entity in my late twenties. I was confident, and elated. However tinge of fear creeped in. I confided in my bosses, who told me “we will give you support, just dont screw it up son” ■

(6) Crash course MBA followed, setting up SOPs, hiring people, preparing business plan, engaging stakeholders, building operational chain. Met many many people, hours spent daily understanding what could go wrong.

(7) It was a successful business. I learned a lot, most importantly the art of focusing and shutting out noise. Over time, I realised sometimes doing few things well will move the firm further than focusing on too many things, and not getting it done at all.

(8) Every subsequent role, I was razor sharp on the objective (PNB colleagues can attest as I was obsessed about every idea having objective & how it’s to be measured). Anything we achieved outside the objective was a bonus for me.

(9) I left my job after 10 wonderful years, difficult decision. But I was curious to learn about other assets classes and I was ambitious in wanting to do more. I moved to Singapore, with my first child about 4 months old.

(10) I was 30 years old then, and was given task to build out a South East Asian business. Essentially replicating what I did across more countries. It was a culture shock. The firm was huge, and was not as cohesive as my previous one. Where do I start? Whom do I speak to?

(11) My first day at work, I sat in our HK office and listened to all the fund managers, who all had different styles of investing. I made it a point to spend the first month, talking, listening and understanding the people, firm & culture. I built friendships internally.

(12) We hired many people, across multi investment disciplines. As staff size increased, nice culture started emerging. This is evidence you cant force culture on people, it's a function of the collective behaviour of people you put together.

(13) Business grew very well, very profitable with focus on solid client relationships, and being sharp in focus & execution. Were there frustrations? Yes. Decisions at the top was frustrating, many driven by wrong KPI. I kept a distance and focused on my role.

(14) Investment is a people business, clients hire you because of the people within your firm who can make excellent investment decisions, and are good at what they do. Nurturing them and managing them was the most difficult thing to do. But highly rewarding.

(15) I realised very early on, I was good with people & clients. Many hate managing team / people, I enjoyed it. I got great satisfaction moving from A to B and seeing that progress. Your strategy is pointless if you cannot lead people.

(16) As years went by, I took on more strategic roles, dealing with clients, strategy and building relationships with investee companies. I put my hand up for industry volunteer groups, industry association, education, women making career returns etc. I networked a lot.

(17) I met great people outside my industry, which was refreshing. Here I was exposed to problems like hiring policies, inadequate training, unconscious bias etc. World opened up outside my finance bubble. I used my position to try and influence this internally as much as I could

(18) PNB was the turning point. The role that would allow me to put everything I experienced to use. Many of the initiatives introduced internally & externally were results of many years of system inefficiency I had experienced myself. I enjoyed it tremendously.

(19) Did I peak early? Yes. I took on roles early, learned a lot myself, through guidance and failures. The tricky part is every next role needs to be bigger, but such roles dont exist in numbers. You get a shot once, and you take it.

(20) In summary, hard work is important - getting job done, and making effort to learn things outside your job. Nobody will spoonfeed your way to success (in an competitive environment). You have to work with the best to know how good you are

(21) Things wont always work out, it’s happened to me. But key is to move on and dont look back in regret. Instead focus on the positive aspects. No point moping. Use it as springboard to the next challenge

(22) My role as CEO has been to remove bureaucracy, decide on strategic direction, pick the beat people, give them the tools to carry their work, and put in place framework to monitor and measure. I hated micro managing and spending time on administrative stuff.

(23) Any CEO who tells you they know everything is lying. They don’t. I didn’t. But I knew enough, and I took control of the most important aspects of the firm, other things delegate. Ultimately accountability lies with me. Be humble always.

(24) Never rule out luck. We often overlook this, but being in right place, right time, and having right people around supporting you, matters a lot. I have been fortunate to have people who believed in me. There are many outside I’m sure who need that one big break

(25) Looking back. I was lucky, had great mentors & colleagues. I was wise to focus on things that would make an impact, and delivered. I networked a lot, and made sure to keep that relationship, you never know when you need help. Surround yourself with good people